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CLINICAL NOTES ON THE EMOTIONS AND THEIR RELATION TO THE MIND

By GEORGE HENRY TAYLOR

In forming a judgment of the emotional factors in a child or a man, it is necessary that every manifestation of emotion should be noted by the observer. His method of examination must be as thorough as that of a trained physician examining a case of illness where doubt exists as to its cause, or of an alienist when determining the sanity or insanity of a patient. A spot diagnosis by a highly trained intelligence is frequently correct, but it is obviously liable to error. A candidate, when examined by the modified Williams' Lantern, may, through a mental lapse and not because of color blindness, name a color wrongly, but he usually at once corrects his error. He may name a red-green, or a green-red; he will not, in my experience, through a mental lapse, name a red-white, or a green-white. This evidence amounts to a suspicion of color blindness, but it would be unjustly used if a candidate were condemned by it without other evidence being considered. The type of person I refer to never repeats his mistake, and shows by the body of evidence in his answers that he is not color-blind. He is never, however, in my opinion, a person with a keen appreciation of color. A person may misname an acquaintance without confusing his identity. He is at least not as liable to misname his wife or his child or his occupation. In the same way a misnaming of red, white or green by an engine driver has a greater significance than the same mistake under similar conditions of examination would have if made by an uneducated candidate for employment.

It may here be mentioned that a mental condition which is the cause of an error, and the trail of a man's life is dotted with errors until it ends, varies little as to the effect, although the consequences which flow from such error may be widely different.

With the average man who lives by labor, a struggle for existence concentrates his mental processes upon the safeguarding of himself and the persons who enter into the

orbit of his emotions. An ordinary man or woman is in sympathy with the emotions common to his or her class, and will frequently resent an emotional appeal which is outside of his or her environment. Among the excitant causes of emotions concerned with the appeal of color, I include certain conditions of sound. The appeal of conduct, or moral sense, I believe to be a recognition, in my mind, of the social obligations under which we exist, and the ability to restrain the appeal of emotions when they are in conflict with this recognition. As "the old order changeth, yielding place to new," what may constitute an active emotion in one phase of development, may in another phase pass entirely out of the emotional orbit of an intelligent and educated person.

There is in certain persons, consciously, and in others, unconsciously, a degree of imitation in emotional appeals. The mummer's attitude is largely present in ordinary life. The majority of men keenly resent a finding which exhibits a defect in one or more of their special senses, and as a consequence, a number of educated persons fail to recognise a well defined defect in themselves. I have conversed with a man who professed to a keen delight in color, and found him by examination to be a red-green blind. I have also lived with a person carefully trained in music to interpret the composition of certain composers on a piano, but who in a harsh voice would sing out of tune, and exhibit uniformly in expression and conduct a real indifference to the emotions of color and music.

In the evolution of emotion there is in the mind a dream condition when emotions at rest or in slight vibration become active. They appeal to the mind for recognition, and finally for expression. In rare beings there are periods in which these conditions are fully met. When the appeal of an emotion can survive criticism, it is gradually absorbed by the mind, and may in time, and under certain conditions, cease to vibrate. Without this preliminary stage of vibration, the conception of a newly born truth is incomplete. A purely scientific process can investigate and criticise, it can take to pieces with infinite care and precision, but it is prone to resent a truth if presented in the vibratory stage of an emotion. The mind seeks a "dry light" and the exclusion of emotion, and may to this extent be prejudiced and narrow in its view.

The stimulus an emotion can produce upon the mind, varies in its intensity at different periods. Every emotional

person will recognise this varying condition in himself,—how at one time the mind is in sympathy with an appeal, and at another is comparatively indifferent, or even resentful. The appeal of emotions to the mind may be divided into two degrees:—

(1) In which there is a preliminary stage of active vibration.

(2) In which the preliminary stage of vibration is slight.

The appeal of a truth in its vibratory stage is essentially an appeal to the young. The deep roots of conviction in a matured mind are rarely disturbed by such an appeal.

The inherited emotional factors in a human being are the emotions concerned in the protection of life, and the necessary association with this of the evolution of intelligence, on the one hand, and the emotions which have their origin in sex, on the other hand. If one of these is defective, then the fundamental emotional factors in the unit are incomplete. An evolution in the emotions which originate in the sense of sex, and among these I include the emotions of color and musical sounds, can only become coherent to a highly endowed and critical intelligence when such intelligence has itself reached an evolutionary stage, capable of interpreting such appeal.

In illustration of my attempt to give a definition of Moral Sense in the foregoing, I described the effect of education upon an average citizen. It should however, be noted, that in a percentage of persons the place of an appeal to the intelligence in regard to conduct is taken by a purely emotional condition. It is in this type that inheritance of color and of musical sounds is found. The emotional type is in marked contrast to the intellectual type I then described. The manifestation of moral sense through the emotions may find expression by different channels. Amongst the poor and uneducated in whom the moral sense generally finds its medium through emotion we have this type in its most perfect form. Music, color, and the emotional qualities which take the form of a keen sympathy with, and entrance into the pathos of life, is expressed in a type approximating Christ, the great exemplar of emotional morality. Emotional morality is in fact independent of any high intellectual development. Indeed a reference to the intellect in criticism of such emotional manifestations appears to be evidence in the unit, of a deficiency in the supreme sex appeal—a manifestation of absolute emotion—consequently what is termed

genius in a painter, a poet or a musician, is a condition in which an appeal to reason is of small value.

It is interesting to note the practical demonstration of this idea in the history of emotional interplay on the various priests of Christ. A sincere and highly intellectual priest tortures or kills persons whom he regards as a menace to his faith, whilst others of the priesthood in the same period regard such acts with abhorrence. If a person criticise these two types without prejudice, he must, I think, recognise on the one hand a reasoning man, and on the other an emotional being who, resenting cruelty, can only appeal to humanity through his own medium of emotion. On a somewhat similar plane is the modern social reformer who, without regard to the suffering and destruction he causes, would precipitate revolution to consummate reasoned idea. Contrasted with this is the man who, resenting violence and cruelty, strives through an appeal to humanity, that is through the stimulus of the emotions, to bring about the same result. The genius—offspring of emotion—is rarely found amongst those who have accumulated wealth. It is the appeal of the tragedy and pathos, the comedy and beauty of life which brings him into being and equips him with the power to love, and to express love to humanity through music and painting, conduct and teaching.

An analogy on these lines can be made between a sex dream, and a nightmare. One is a delirium of sex, the other a riot in the intelligence. There is no fear in the one, fear is the prominent phenomenon of the other. Fear is an intellectual appraisal, whilst love is the emotional manifestation of sex. These appear to be the conditions of a supreme intellectual and sex appeal—and “Love casteth out Fear.” Under such a stimulus must Beethoven have composed his “Kreutzer Sonata” on the one hand, and Poe his “Raven” on the other; the one a purely emotional outpour, the other a piece of intellectual artistry.

The creative musician, the painter either in words or upon canvas, and that still rarer form of emotional type, the Christ-like man, all make their supreme appeal through emotion. It is, I believe, in the last analysis, a sex appeal, purged of animalism, and is nearly always an appeal from a man, and through men to women and children. The mind of man, taking mind in this sense to include both intellect and emotion, may for the purpose of demonstration be compared to a straight line. At one end of this potential line is reason,

at the other, the emotions having their origin in sex. The emotional and intellectual conditions of a commonplace man in a civilized community (and the large proportion of men are commonplace) differ in education and environment more than in intellectual or emotional inheritance. He stands within a limited orbit somewhere about the middle of this line. If we judge the value of men by an economic standard, then it is probable in this assessment that a hod-carrier is of greater value to the community in which he lives, than is an emotional genius. It is simply a question of standards. At the reasoning end of the straight line I have described, sex would, in such an economic standard, be regarded as a function with periods of excitement in the unit. The male mind, apart from lust, would then appraise the value of a female as a child producer and mother. This appraisal would differ in values though not in principle when made by a brute type on the one hand, and a high intelligence on the other. The appeal of moral sense in the ordinary man I have described, is very little more than a recognition of danger from the standpoint of law or social convention. If he recognise a danger signal he will frequently disregard it, provided he can do so with safety and advantage to himself.